

division of community services



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Peer-to-Peer Technical Assistance Program

Fact Sheet

The Peer-to-Peer Program utilizes the skills and abilities of local officials or employees of one community to assist local government in another community. The program provides small grants that allow a recipient community to contract with a peer from another community. Peer projects are short-term problem solving or technical assistance projects related to community development and capacity building at the local level. Funding is provided through the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). The maximum grant amount is \$1,000 and provides up to 30 hours of technical assistance

How it works

Step 1: A municipality must provide DHCD with a brief written description of the problem or issue, the technical assistance needed and documentation of a vote of the Board of Selectmen or a letter from the Mayor or Town/City Manager supporting the request for a peer. Communities may propose a local official from another community to serve as the peer or ask DHCD for help in finding a peer.

Step 2: DHCD staff reviews the request. If the request is eligible and the project is approved, DHCD identifies an appropriate peer or contacts the peer suggested by the community. Once the peer is recruited and accepts the terms and conditions of the program, DHCD prepares and completes a contract with the municipality

Step 3: The Peer provides the services as specified in the contract. When the work is completed to the municipality's satisfaction, a brief final report is prepared and transmitted to DHCD with a request for payment. DHCD reimburses the municipality and the municipality reimburses the peer.

(continued)

Sample Projects

- Grant start-up and record keeping processes
- Developing guidelines for housing rehabilitation programs
- Developing guidelines for commercial rehabilitation programs
- Downtown revitalization
- Establishing micro-enterprise assistance programs
- Preparing for a GIS needs assessment
- Developing policies for economic development, septic system betterment programs, revolving loan funds, etc.
- Community development-related management capacity study
- Historic preservation

Who is eligible

All non-entitlement communities are eligible to apply.

Application process

Applications are accepted on a continuous basis. However, funding is limited.

The request is reviewed to ensure that it meets the following minimum requirements:

1. It does not give an unfair advantage to one community over another in a competitive situation, i.e., preparing a grant application or recruiting a specific business.
2. It does not propose as a Peer either a municipal official who is an elected or appointed official or an employee of the community making the request.

DHCD reserves the right to modify a proposed project to more closely meet the purposes of the program.

Funding limits:

\$1000 maximum per municipality

\$900 covers up to 30 hours of technical assistance; \$100 covers reimbursement for travel, photocopying and/or the cost of incidental materials.

For more information

Please contact John Fitzgerald, DHCD Peer-to-Peer Program Coordinator at (617) 573-1446 or by e-mail at John.Fitzgerald@ocd.state.ma.us